

# Port Adelaide Bicycle User Group (the 'PortBUG').



Draft Walking & Cycling Plan Workshop.

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2021.

"The Port BUG"

## Some Questions for Councillors to Consider.

**1. The Port CBD has Become an Active Travel Nexus:** Port Adelaide – its waterfront & historic precincts, its CBD & the direct access it offers to Semaphore & the Coast Park is now in a *unique position* as the meeting point or nexus of a number of secure off-road bikeways - notably the Port River Bikeway, the Outer Harbor Greenway & the Coast Park Bikeway. Currently these bring hundreds of bicycle users – commuters, recreational & fitness cyclists – into and through The Port. This number can only increase!

***It is important that Council consider the role of Active Transport in providing more socially, environmentally & economically sustainable options for residents & business.***

**Question:** What strategies does the draft Plan offer for improving community access to these bikeways, for maximizing their use & for ensuring the Port CBD can optimise associated health & economic benefits, & positive business & tourism outcomes?

**2. Planning Active Mobility Within the Port CBD:** There are a number of significant access & safety issues inherent in the 'road-focused' approach the draft Plan has taken to pedestrian & bicycle activity within the Port CBD. As a consequence, the draft Plan *cannot* effectively provide for the walking & cycling needs of the community:

- the draft Plan offers no data or analysis regarding walking & cycling activity or needs in the Port CBD (including no reference to an effective consultation strategy, movement tracking, disability access needs or identification of safety issues)
- the Plan lacks a critical explanation of Active Transport issues *for all users* within the Port CBD now & into the future (including those with disabilities)
- there is no acknowledgement of (or commitment to) the extensive recommendations made - particularly for improved pedestrian provisions - in the 2018 'Port Adelaide Centre & Port Dock Station – Associated Movement & Access Improvements Study'.

For example:

- it is inappropriate & unsafe *to recommend Church Street as a default bicycle route* through the CBD – it's far too narrow & complex to classify it (as the draft Plan suggests) as a 'shared traffic' space. Painted lines & sharrows won't make it safer!
- on Nelson St – supposedly a bike route giving access to the Port CBD – safety & convenience for bicycle users have been ignored, particularly with regard to continuity & safety for Greenway users & access to the CBD across St Vincent St.

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- no effective solutions are offered to key safety issues for pedestrians, bicycle users & those with disability on Lipson Street Sth, a key section of the Outer Harbor Greenway. Lipson St remains a heavy transport & 'rat running' route with pedestrian crossing & footpath upgrades remaining incomplete or nonexistent despite years of discussion!

There needs to be a *separate & detailed* planning exercise focusing on the safety and accessibility of the Port CBD to avoid it becoming a future 'Black Spot'! Any planning needs to address the CBD's critical & access safety issues in concrete terms.

### Questions:

- Do Council officers consider those recommendations made by the Plan for the Port CBD adequate to ensure safe & effective access for *all* pedestrians, bicycle users & other forms of Active Transport (including those using mobility devices)?
- Will Council consider a separate & more detailed study of Active Transport use & development for the Port CBD?

3. **Safe Route Choices for 'Vulnerable Road Users':** Residents who choose to walk or cycle are generally described as 'vulnerable road users'. Although over 70% of Adelaide households have a working adult bicycle and despite the health & economic benefits cycling offers, the fraction of daily travel undertaken by bike remains below 2%. Safety concerns remain the main reason given for *choosing not to ride* (or by parents not allowing children to use their bikes! The best walking & cycling plans *clearly identify* key strategies required ensure safe travel outcomes & to maximize participation.

It therefore seems essential Walking & Cycling Plan make specific & consistent provision for safe & secure use of these transport modes and *not* make recommendations that compromise safety for walking, cycling & other forms of Active Transport. Physical separation of pedestrian & bicycle users from motor traffic has proven internationally the most effective strategy in both ensuring safe travel & increased participation. Yet the draft Walking & Cycling Plan appears to place an inordinate emphasis on expanding *on-road painted bike lanes* without recommending a single new *off-road bikeway or shared-path!*

***It is important that Council not support or ratify a Walking & Cycling Plan that places vulnerable road users at increased, unnecessary or otherwise avoidable risk!***

### Questions:

- What *overall strategies* (such as reduced speed zones, physically separated bikeways, automatic rail crossings) does the Plan recommend to Council to maximize safety & security for pedestrians, bicycle users & those with disabilities?

- How will the Plan ensure the safety of pedestrian & bicycle users in those key 'shared use' zones it appears to identify (such as heavy vehicle routes, shared-traffic zones & shopping or school precincts) where pedestrians, younger folk, bicycle users & those with disabilities are particularly vulnerable?
- Why does the draft Plan *not* recommend key opportunities to build *new separated bikeways & shared-use paths* previously identified such as the Rosewater (rail-trail) Loop, the Gilman Rail Reserve connector linking the Port River & Perkins Drive Bikeways to the Outer Harbor Greenway, & the proposed Parks Connector local-road route?

**4. Traffic Volumes, Heavy Vehicles & Cycling Safety:** Heavy vehicle use in the PA/E Council Area is predicted to increase markedly – probably 3-4 fold – over the next few years. This poses particular challenges for walking & cycling development & for the safety of individual users of these travel modes.

***In considering possibilities for increased participation in walking & cycling – particularly for younger folk, families & commuters - is essential that Councillors not endorse a Walking & Cycling Plan that places pedestrians, cyclists, mobility device users & other vulnerable road users at risk!***

Several of the roads identified by the draft Plan as *key bicycle routes* carry high traffic volumes, often including heavy vehicles travelling at speeds incompatible with walking & cycling safety. A notable example occurs on page 32 (added emphasis):

***“The remainder of the metropolitan network consists of bicycle lanes installed on main and secondary roads. Grand Junction Road forms the ‘backbone’ of this network, running east-west across the length of the Council area. A series of north-south links stem from Grand Junction Road, providing connectivity from Outer Harbour into the Adelaide CBD. These bicycle lanes provide separation between cyclists and motorists and are generally effective for confident cyclists.”***

The draft Plan is recommending Grand Junction Road be seen as the east-west 'backbone' of the PA/E Bicycle Network. *This status has never been accorded Grand Junction Road in any of the previous PA/E Bike Plans nor is it so identified by DIT!* The overwhelming feedback of PortBUG members (many being 'confident cyclists') has been that Grand Junction Rd is an *extremely unsafe cycling environment* that they will not use under any circumstances.

It also is noteworthy that a key element of PA/E's *previous bike plans* has been *identifying & building route options* for current & potential bicycle users who are 'less confident' (including younger folk) *and* providing options for the 90%-plus in the community who do not use their bikes because *they are concerned for their safety!*

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There are *no concrete recommendations at all* regarding 'less confident' or *potential* bicycle users in the draft Walking & Cycling Plan.

***Councillors are advised to the draft Plans reliance on expanded painted bike-lanes (including recommendations re Grand Junction Road & other main roads) with care!***

### Questions:

- To what extent does the draft Plan identify walking & cycling safety hazards associated with the predicted increase of heavy vehicles on PA/E's road network & what strategies are recommended to reduce hazards for pedestrians & bicycle users?
- What recommendations does the draft Plan offer for provision of *alternatives* to use of 'heavy & commercial vehicle routes' such as Grand Junction Road?
- What alternative *off-road* routes does the draft Plan recommend for existing heavily-used shared-traffic zones such as those identified within the Port CBD (notably Church Street, Nelson Street, Lipson & St Vincent Streets).

5. **Errors & Omissions:** There are many factual errors & significant omissions in the draft Plan (identified separately by PortBUG in a submission to PA/E staff). *Many will be immediately obvious to residents if the Plan is intended as a public document.*

***It is important for the new Walking & Cycling Plan's credibility & community support that Council ensure it is accurate & reflects the situation 'on the ground'.***

**Question:** Can staff assure Councillors that the Plan authors are aware of these errors & omissions and they will be corrected in the final draft to be ratified by Council?

6. **Public Understanding & Use of the Plan:** Compared to other current 'best practice' Bike Plans (Bendigo, Sydney, Newcastle, Auckland etc) the draft PA/E Plan is:

- overly long with a confused structure & is not easily accessible or informative for the casual or 'lay' reader
- lacks clear statements 'upfront' regarding challenges & goals to be addressed over the Plan period
- does not effectively promote Active Transport's benefits or identify outcomes sought & strategies to be pursued
- does not recommend (or provide resources for) an effective PA/E *on-line Active Transport presence*
- lacks any reference to initial or to ongoing community consultation
- adopting an excessive 10-year span.

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**Questions:**

- **Will the Plan provide residents & Councillors with an Executive Summary clearly identifying challenges, benefits, outcomes & strategies?**
- **How will the Plan ensure Council & community commitment to its implementation over the next 10 years?**
- **How will the Plan provide Council with the key graphic resources required for improving & updating *on-line information* re. its Walking & Cycling Network?**
- **Can an interim review of the Walking & Cycling Plan be considered (ie; at the 5-year point) to ensure ongoing relevance, accountability, community feedback & Council & community support?**



Sam Powrie,  
Secretary,

*On behalf of the Port Adelaide Bicycle User Group.*